Indian and Northern Affairs Canada | Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada

Canada

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
www.ainc-inac.gc.ca

GOVERNMENTS TAKE FURTHER STEPS FOR NORTHERNERS TO HAVE GREATER CONTROL OVER THEIR LAND AND RESOURCES

2-3066

Fort Liard, Northwest Territories (July 14, 2008) The Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, joined the Honourable Michael Miltenberger, Deputy Premier of the Government of the Northwest Territories and Chief Steven Kotchea of the Acho Dene Koe First Nation in an important signing ceremony signifying the start of land claim negotiations.

"This agreement will finally allow Acho Dene Koe First Nation to begin formal negotiations on land and resources in its region," said Minister Strahl. "This is yet another concrete step our government is taking to help First Nations and Métis become self-sufficient, because a stronger economy in the Dehcho means a stronger economy in the Northwest Territories and Canada."

This Framework Agreement sets out how the three parties will engage in land and resource negotiations. It also sets out how community governance for Fort Liard may be addressed. Later phases of negotiations with Canada may address Acho Dene Koe's outstanding claim issues in British Columbia and the Yukon.

The Framework is also an important step forward in the Government of Canada's Northern Strategy that will help Northerners develop a vibrant economy, and ultimately give them greater control over their destinies. Our strategy supports this vision by focusing on four priorities: economic and social development, governance, environmental protection and sovereignty.

"This is the historic moment that Acho Dene Koe First Nation has been waiting for. It has arrived in part due to the work of previous Chiefs and Councils. We look forward to a brighter future for our nation," said Chief Kotchea.

"The signing of the Framework Agreement marks a significant step forward in the Acho Dene Koe First Nation land and resources negotiations," said Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations, the Honourable Floyd Roland, who could not attend the ceremony due to prior commitments. "The Government of the Northwest Territories hopes that the positive momentum of Acho Dene Koe First Nation negotiations will continue towards an agreement-in-principle."

Canada, the Dehcho First Nations and the Government of the Northwest Territories have been involved in negotiations since 1999. The Acho Dene Koe First Nation, a member of the Dehcho First Nations, has been advocating to be engaged in its own negotiations with Canada and the territorial government for years. This Framework Agreement is a direct response to their wishes.

For further information please contact:

Minister's Office
Josée Bellemare
Press Secretary
Office of the Honourable Chuck Strahl

Government of the Northwest Territories
Brad Poulter
Office of the Premier
(867) 669-2302

819-997-0002

Media Relations
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
819-953-1160

Acho Dene Koe First Nation
Anne Marie McGuire
Executive Director
(867) 770-4141

Date Modified:2008-07-28